

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Biweekly Period Ending April 8, 2000

Phoenix Metro Area

Manufacturing

A developer of **airbags for commercial airplanes** expects to **hire 250 to 300 employees over the next five years** for a manufacturing operation **east of Williams Gateway Airport in Mesa**. Based in Phoenix, **AMSAFE Inc.** will initially build a 30,000-square-foot manufacturing building and a 10,000-square-foot testing facility on 36 acres at Williams Field and Mountain roads to house its Inflatable Restraints division. The division, which currently employs 24 workers in two buildings at Williams Gateway Airport, expects the first phase of construction to be completed by 2001. AMSAFE will begin installing airbags in a major airline's passenger fleet later this year.

Maxwell Productions, LLC, expects to open an 85,000-square-foot **DVD manufacturing and warehouse facility** at Scottsdale's Perimeter Center (8521 E. Princess Drive) in July. A DVD (digital versatile disc) looks like a CD, but it stores 10 times as much information. Maxwell, which will imprint software, music and movies on DVD's, expects to **employ up to 200 people within a year** after opening.

Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities

Phoenix-based **Belden Communications** and **Corella Electric Wire & Cable** are the beneficiaries of a **multimillion-dollar contract** to build wire and cable products for SBC Communications. The nation's largest local telephone company, SBC is expanding its digital and wire-less operations throughout the United States. **Belden**, which produces the cable, expects to **add 250 people** to its workforce of 1,500; **Corella**, which makes the wire, is also expected to expand its operations, although no informa-

tion is available on potential new jobs. Belden and Corella are both located near 51st Avenue and Van Buren Street.

Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

More details have surfaced about the consolidation of **Prudential Corp.'s Real Estate and Relocation Services** division at the 733-acre Kierland multi-use development **in northeast Phoenix** (see below, and Dec. 4, 1999, *Industry Update*). Work is now expected to begin within a few months on an 80,000-square-foot operations center on 42 acres near Scottsdale Road and Greenway Parkway. **Initially the center will employ 600**, but that number is **expected to quadruple by late 2003**, according to officials with the Greater Phoenix Economic Council and the Arizona Department of Commerce. Although the opening of the Prudential center is at least a year away, **work is proceeding quickly on the rest of the Kierland development**, which will include 2,000 homes and apartments, an upscale shopping center (similar to the Borgata in Scottsdale), offices, restaurants, 27-hole golf course, and a planned Westin resort. At the heart of the development will be Kierland Commons, an upscale shopping center that has leased 90 percent of its first-phase space. About the same percentage of 2,000 homes and apartments have been completed, while about one-half of 1 million square feet of office space has been finished.

National accounting firm **Arthur Andersen** expects to **hire more than 400 people** for a new **technology center** opening at **Papago Park Center in Tempe** this summer. Positions at the 65,000-square-foot facility at Priest Drive and Washington Street will include **accountants, computer technicians, and human resources and support staff**. The company is expanding because of a \$250 mil-

lion contract with General Motors to perform functions such as accounts payable, payroll, and dealer billing. The center is expected to eventually hire an additional 100 workers.

Services

A number of **Internet-related businesses are expanding** their operations in the Valley.

LeapSource, a Web-based finance and accounting company, expects to **employ 125 people** at its new 15,000-square-foot offices at Hayden Square in **downtown Tempe**. ... San Diego-based **Stellcom**, which provides Internet solutions for companies, will **expand its workforce from five to 35** at its main office near Camelback Road and 32nd Street. ...

Qwest Communications announced it will build a 100,000- square-foot Web-hosting operation in Phoenix as part of a \$5 billion deal with IBM to build 28 CyberCenters throughout the country. The centers will contain servers and other computer equipment to access Qwest's 25,000-mile fiber-optic network. The Phoenix-area center will open in about three years.

Balance of State

Manufacturing

New tourism jobs in Flagstaff are a welcome addition, but higher-paying manufacturing jobs are even sweeter. One of the nation's largest **producers of ice cream cones** opened a **63,000-square-foot manufacturing plant** near Flagstaff's Pulliam Airport in mid-March to service its West Coast customers. **Joy Cone Co.** of Hermitage, Pa., is initially employing about 20 workers, but **expects to hire three times as many people** by the **middle of 2001**. Entry-level packing jobs on the night shift will pay between \$10 and \$11 an hour, with full medical benefits, the company said. A \$40,000 grant from the Arizona Department of Commerce will be used to offset training costs.

Construction

A **July groundbreaking** is planned for the first of a three-phase, **\$3 million project** to build a library and additional classrooms at

the **Lake Havasu City campus** of Mohave Community College. The project is being funded by \$5.5 million in revenue bonds, but ultimately the bonds will be paid off through funds raised by the MCC Foundation, a non-profit group that supports the community college. Work on the **first phase is expected to be completed by August 2002**.

Trade

Close to **300 part- and full-time jobs** will be created by the **opening of three new Lake Havasu City restaurants** between late April and mid-May. **In & Out Burger** will hire **60 workers**, while **Del Taco** expects to employ **30 to 40 people**, and **Bob's Big Boy** says it needs **80 to 100 employees**.

Government

The head of the state Department of Corrections plans to **expand the Arizona State Prison complex in Safford** to hold an additional 250 inmates. Director Terry Stewart announced the enlargement, which will require **125 new prison employees**, at the recent opening of a new Graham Unit Administration building at the Safford prison. Enlargement of the Safford facility, however, is not expected to begin until completion of additional facilities at the state's Tucson prison complex.

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